

IASC Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action

Collection of Promising/Good Practice and Existing Resources

Overview: IASC Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action

More than one billion people—approximately 15% of the global population—are persons with disabilities, 80% of whom live in poverty¹. The report of the Secretary-General for the World Humanitarian Summit (2016) recognized that persons with disabilities are among the most marginalised in any crisis-affected community². The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) obligates States Parties to protect and ensure the safety of persons with disabilities in situations of risk, including situations of armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and the occurrence of natural disasters (Article 11), and to ensure that protection services are age-, gender- and disability-sensitive (Article 16).

A [Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action](#) launched during the World Humanitarian Summit (May 2016) included a commitment to develop globally-endorsed UN system-wide guidelines on the inclusion of persons with disabilities. In July 2016, the UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) endorsed the establishment of a Task Team for a period of two years (January 2017 – December 2018) to develop IASC Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action.

Despite the scope and severity of the risks faced by person with disabilities during crises, current programming fails to ensure their inclusion in terms of safety and protection, meaningful access to essential services, and full participation. In order to facilitate the systematic inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action, the IASC Guidelines will:

- Elaborate on the steps required to provide equal access to humanitarian assistance;
- Create space for organisations of persons with disabilities (“DPOs”) to participate in humanitarian action and engage in decision-making processes impacting their lives; and
- Provide advice to humanitarian stakeholders on how to uphold humanitarian principles and leave no one behind

How to Support the Development of the IASC Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities

There are different ways to support the development of the IASC Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities:

- Joining the IASC Task Team on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities which meets (virtually) on a monthly basis;
- Disseminating and completing the global online survey to be launched early 2018;
- Participating in consultations being conducted in the Pacific, Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, Africa and Latin America regions;

¹ World Health Organization and the World Bank, *World Report on Disability* (2011)

² General Assembly, *One Humanity: Shared Responsibility, Report of the Secretary-General for the World Humanitarian Summit A/70/90* (2 February 2016), available from <http://undocs.org/A/70/709>

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- Contributing to thematic / expert / review group that will draft sectoral chapters in the guidelines;
- Testing the draft guidelines with field staff and partners; and,
- Providing financial and technical resources to the guidelines development process.

IASC Task Team on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action

Participation in the IASC Task Team is open to all interested international and local humanitarian organisations, UN agencies, DPOs, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders with a commitment to inclusive humanitarian action for persons with disabilities. IASC Task Team members are encouraged to include discussions regarding the Guidelines' process and substance in their own specific programmes and events, and to report back to the IASC Task Team on their outcomes in monthly meetings.

For more information, including the Task Team Terms of Reference, work plan, financial requirements or to join the IASC Task Team, please visit the [IASC Task Team webpage](#).

Purpose of this info sheet

A number of organisations of persons with disabilities (DPOs) and mainstream humanitarian actors have developed guidelines, strategies, processes and practices that respect and promote the rights of persons with disabilities, ensuring their protection and access to humanitarian assistance on an equal basis with others. This information sheet provides information on the collection of positive practices and existing resources that will be used to develop the IASC Guidelines either by:

- Providing content (learning from practices, gaps identified, etc.)
- Practical examples of inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action
- Identify and address existing knowledge, resources and practice gaps across sectors

1. Existing guidelines and tools

The IASC Guidelines development will be based in part on existing resources developed by mainstream humanitarian actors and DPOs. The IASC Task Team is requesting humanitarian stakeholders and DPOs to share their guidelines, tools and experiences that will help to develop appropriate content.

We are looking for:

- General and/or sector-specific guidelines that address disability in humanitarian action
- Policy frameworks
- Tools (data collection tools, checklists, infrastructure accessibility guidance, etc.)

2. Practical examples of inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action

For the development of the IASC Guidelines we would like to identify promising/good practices for inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action at all levels. Sector-specific practices, process-inclusion practices or system-related practices will inform and strengthen the IASC Guidelines.

What we are looking for:

- Practices which exemplify the core principles of inclusion as described in the CRPD and other frameworks: e.g. non-discrimination, participation, accessibility, safety and respect for dignity, avoiding harm, reasonable accommodation, recognition of the skills and capacities of all people.
- Practices which have resulted in meaningful access to all services, increased participation in

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decision-making, and increased resilience.

- Practices which have resulted in positive changes to policy, practice, knowledge, attitudes, behaviour and relationships.
- Practices which meet some or all of the following criteria which determine their value for learning:
 - **Demonstrable impact** i.e. clear, documented change and positive impact.
 - **Replicable** i.e. adaptable for another context
 - **Sustainable** i.e. potential for local actors to continue the practice independently.
 - **Systemic** i.e. achieving change at a systems-level so that the practice becomes routine.
 - **Efficient** in terms of time, finances, and human resources.
 - **Person centred** i.e. there is active involvement of individual users (and/or representative institutions) in any decisions which concern them.
 - **Corroborated** i.e. the learning is supported by multiple cases

How to capture the full story?

In order to maximize the learning from a positive practice it is important to understand the full story i.e. the context and the process as well as the outcomes. Try to answer the following questions:

- What was the sequence of events/decisions which led to the practice?
- Was there an assessment or an analysis conducted before the practice? What planning was required?
- What steps were taken to identify and remove barriers to inclusion for different groups? (e.g. according to age, gender, disability status)
- What evidence do you have that the practice was inclusive?
- What were the most significant changes that resulted?
- How was the practice different from how you have operated before?
- What resources were required? (i.e. human, financial, technical)

3. Identify and address existing knowledge, resources, practice gaps and innovative approaches across sectors

Inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action isn't uniform across sectors and processes. Some sectors are only starting to include persons with disabilities either because they had other issues to address or because a rapid evolution of the sector processes, modalities and tools has yet to be documented in terms of inclusion of persons with disabilities.

What we are looking for:

- Identification of sectors where very little resources, evidence or positive practices are available for inclusion of persons with disabilities, such as nutrition and others.
- Identification of new approaches, aid modalities, trends that are at early stage of implementation and haven't yet built up evidence on exclusion or inclusion of persons with disabilities, such as Cash Transfer assistance and other.

If you can contribute to any of the above please share information or contact: iascdisability@gmail.com

If required, we may be able to provide you with format, questions or support to collect material.